



Department of Economic and
Community Development

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Tim Sullivan
Deputy Commissioner

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
2/23/15

RE: HB 6816: ACT CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY

Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, Senator Boucher, Representative O'Dea and members of the Transportation Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify regarding HB 6816: An Act Concerning the Connecticut Port Authority.

In June of 2014, Public Act 14-222 was signed into law by Governor Malloy after being passed unanimously by the Connecticut General Assembly. That legislation established the Connecticut Port Authority as an independent state governmental body that will come into existence on October 1, 2015.

In addition to establishing the Connecticut Port Authority, Public Act 14-222 created a Port Authority Working Group to provide guidance and recommendations regarding the Connecticut Port Authority to the Department of Economic and Community Development.

The Working Group, comprised of representatives from numerous stakeholder groups and the private sector and chaired by DECD Commissioner Catherine Smith and Department of Transportation Commissioner James Redeker, has been meeting regularly since October 2014 to discuss the tools and resources the Connecticut Port Authority will need to be successful in its mission of expanding economic activity and jobs in Connecticut's maritime economy.

As directed by PA 14-222, DECD, working closely with DOT, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Office of Policy and Management, will be submitting a report to the Governor and the General Assembly committees on Commerce, Transportation and the Environment containing recommendations regarding the Connecticut Port Authority.

DECD believes that our ports and harbors of all sizes are a critical but underutilized part of our economy. We believe that the establishment of the new Port Authority will help focus attention on bringing more jobs and new business activity to the state.

The recommendations will be mindful, however, of the limited revenue streams currently available to support the Port Authority, of the work that will be required to build up a larger revenue stream for the new Authority, and of the budget challenges facing the state this year.



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We look forward to working closely with Governor's office, the General Assembly and the many stakeholders in our state's waterfront to develop legislation in this session which implements these recommendations.